

Striving For A Healthy Sierra Nevada

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Sonora, CA -- The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is working to build consensus among competing environmental and business entities across the region.

The state agency was formed in 2004 under Governor Schwarzenegger, and has a mission of improving the environmental, economic, and social well being of the Sierra Nevada and its communities.



Jim Branham

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"We're trying to bring parties together and really try to find out how to move the ball forward in terms of creating healthy forests," says Jim Branham, Executive Director. "Healthy forests for habitat values, clean water, clean air and being resilient to fire."

"This area has went through a cycle and we're on a trend where a lot of the traditional woods related jobs are disappearing, and we really need to figure out a way to manage the forest sustainably and do it in a way that creates local jobs," he adds.

Branham says it is important to protect the infrastructure the state has and its traditional lumber operations, but also investigate opportunities related to biomass and manufacturing of niche products like wood pellets.

The agencies latest push is entitled the "Sustainable Sierra Nevada Initiative," and its goal is to bring the different entities to the table to facilitate collaboration and build consensus about the future of the region.

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